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Strengthening the United Nations machinery for drug control

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Report of the Executive Director

1. In its resolution 1999/30, entitled "Review of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme: strengthening the United Nations machinery for international drug control within the scope of the existing international drug control treaties and in accordance with the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations", the Economic and Social Council identified the following areas on which to focus in order to strengthen the United Nations machinery for drug control: (a) enhancing the functioning of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs; (b) enhancing the functioning of the International Narcotics Control Board; (c) strengthening the financing of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP); (d) the framework for inter-agency cooperation and coordination; and (e) the operations of UNDCP. In its resolution 54/132, the General Assembly took note of the recommendations contained in Council resolution 1999/30, and stressed its resolve to strengthen the United Nations machinery for international drug control, in particular UNDCP, to enable it to fulfil its mandate.

2. The measures recommended to enhance the functioning of the Commission have been implemented, as reflected in the new structure of the agenda of the Commission. The measures to enhance the functioning of the Board were brought to the attention of the World Health Organization and the Council prior to the election of new members of the Board in 1999. Similarly, the ongoing close relationship between the Board and UNDCP have contributed to increased synergies between the Board and the Programme.

3. With regard to strengthening the financing of UNDCP, the Council had recommended that a sufficient share of the regular budget of the United Nations be allocated to enable UNDCP to fulfil its mandates. In the context of a zero-growth budget, UNDCP received a substantial increase from the regular budget of the United Nations for the biennium 2000-2001. That reflects the priority attributed by Member States to drug control following the twentieth special session of the General Assembly. In spite of the significant increase, the additional amount falls far short of the resources required for the full implementation of the action plans and measures

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adopted at the twentieth special session. While initiatives to broaden the donor base of UNDCP have not led to a significant increase in the number of donors, the pledging of voluntary contributions increased by 35 per cent during 1999 compared to 1998. Increased resources from cost-sharing arrangements with beneficiaries of technical assistance provided by UNDCP also contributed to the improved financial situation of the Programme. At the reconvened forty-second session of the Commission, the Executive Director of UNDCP, in response to Council resolution 1999/30, submitted to the Commission an analysis of the implications of instituting a results-based budget for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (E/CN.7/1999/19). The analysis took into account the practices of other funds and programmes within the United Nations system. In line with the recommendation of the Council, the budget of the Fund of UNDCP continues to be harmonized with the budgets of those funds and programmes.

4. The Council requested the Executive Director of UNDCP, with the assistance of the Chairman of the High-level Expert Group to review the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and to strengthen the United Nations Machinery for Drug Control, to continue to explore innovative means of increasing the resources for drug control programmes, including the creation of a global drug facility, for example, along the lines of the Global Environment Facility, and to report thereon to the Commission at its forty-third session. Pursuant to that request, the Executive Director initiated direct consultations with the President of the World Bank, who was strongly in favour of closer cooperation with UNDCP, in particular through support by the Bank for poverty eradication as a component of alternative development programmes. UNDCP field offices have been involved with the World Bank at the country level in efforts to eradicate illicit crops through alternative development within the framework of poverty eradication programmes.

5. In consultation with the Chairman of the High-level Expert Group, it was decided to pursue an incremental approach, seeking at an initial stage to enlist World Bank support for UNDCP operations at the field level. The engagement and participation of the World Bank in UNDCP programmes, particularly those aimed at poverty eradication as a component of alternative development programmes, is considered to be an essential building block for the more ambitious objective of establishing a global drug facility. The eventual establishment of a global drug facility should be carefully planned. For fruitful and sustainable cooperation to emerge, it is imperative for the World Bank to be fully involved as an institution in support of drug control. The Executive Director will inform the Commission, at its forty-forth session, of the status of cooperation with the World Bank.

6. The issue of drug control has been designated as a major cross-cutting priority for the United Nations system. Monitoring the implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly will become part of the United Nations review of the follow-up to major conferences through the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary machinery. The process of intergovernmental coordination and follow-up will also involve monitoring, providing additional support for the implementation of the action plans and measures adopted at the twentieth special session to further international cooperation in drug control.

7. With regard to inter-agency coordination and cooperation, UNDCP has actively participated in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) to ensure that drug control is recognized by Member States as a national priority. That has led to a marked trend towards joint multi-agency initiatives involving drug control. Through UNDAF, UNDCP is seeking greater involvement of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in its activities, given the special role of UNDP as a coordinator for development activities within the United Nations system.

8. Similarly, the Subcommittee on Drug Control of the Administrative Committee on Coordination has emphasized the importance of strengthening coordination in operational activities at the field level. It has taken the initiative to develop a broad policy framework within which participating agencies could fit their individual and joint activities. In that regard, joint activities and programmes are currently being undertaken with the involvement of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (UNAIDS), the United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural

Development, the Asian Development Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank, mainly in the field of demand reduction and the eradication of illicit drug crops as a part of alternative development programmes. Cooperation with ILO exemplifies the synergies between the drug control mandates of two organizations within the United Nations system. After a five-year pilot testing programme in five countries, a UNDCP/ILO methodology for addressing substance abuse in the workplace is currently being implemented around the world. As an expression of its commitment to enhancing inter-agency cooperation, UNDCP became the seventh co-sponsor of UNAIDS in 1999, resulting in closer cooperation in the planning and implementation of activities targeting drug-injecting abusers. The report of the Executive Director on the activities of UNDCP (E/CN.7/2000/9) describes the initiatives taken during 1999 to strengthen the operations of UNDCP that will contribute to enhancing the capacity of the United Nations system to achieve the overall objectives of drug control.

9. The Commission is invited to provide guidance on action to be taken by UNDCP and the United Nations system to strengthen the role of the United Nations in the field of drug control. Of particular importance is the role that the specialized agencies and the funds and programmes will be called upon to play, within their respective mandates, to support government efforts to implement, within the agreed time-frames, the action plans and measures adopted by the General Assembly at its twentieth special session.